

From W. Edwards

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THE
Peculiar Advantages
OF
THE ENGLISH NATION;

CELEBRATED
IN A SERMON,
ON SUNDAY THE FOURTH OF NOVEMBER,
BEING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH-DAY OF
KING WILLIAM THE THIRD.

By the Rev. C. E. DE COETLOGON, A.M.

Mexeray, the celebrated Historian, who, about the Beginning of King William's Reign, conversed with a Person of Quality upon the Difference of the Government in France and England, broke out into these Expressions—
O Fortunatos! sua si bona nōrint, Angligenas!

When Those, whom Heaven *distinguishes* o'er Millions,
And showers profusely Power and Splendor on them,
Whate'er the expanded Heart can wish, when They,
Accepting the Reward, neglect the Duty,
Or worse, pervert those Gifts to Deeds of Ruin,
Is there a Nation then, so base, as *They*?

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THE ENGLISH NATION

IN A LETTER

TO THE

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APOLOGY, TO THE PUBLIC.

IT has been said, in the great Senate of the Nation, by one of the brightest *political Luminaries* of the Age, that, "The Clergy have no Business with Politics." — A Sentiment, which, in my humble Opinion, ought to have been treated with unanimous Indignation. For, is not a Clergyman, a *Man*? Is he not a *Citizen*? Is he not a *Member of Society*? And, Is it not his Duty, in his compound Capacity to be a *Patriot*? if, by that, be meant a Lover of his Country.

I know not, from whence such a Sentiment could arise in the Breast of a warm Contender for all the Principles of *The glorious Revolution*; unless it were from the extemporaneous Impulse of *democratic Ty-*

ranny, or of *democratic Fear* : especially, when it is recollected, that, The glorious Revolution itself was materially owing to the cool, consciencious, and intrepid Firmness of some of the Clerical Order.

With this Example before my Eyes, and though a certain Writer, whose Terms of studied Resentment and Rancour I shall not condescend to imitate, has thought proper to denominate me, “ *a ridiculous Victim, an insignificant Sacrifice, an illiterate Zealot,*” for an *official* Sermon on the *Test-Act* — I have nevertheless ventured to take another Liberty with the Public; by submitting to their Consideration, *in these critical Times*, a concise View of *The peculiar Advantages* we enjoy, as a Nation — which, I flatter myself, the candid and impartial among them will not deem *insignificant*, or *ridiculous*, however illiterate they may be pronounced by illiberal Faction, and ungovernable Malignity.

Amidst

Amidst the various Contentions for *The Rights of Man*—which have both distinguished, and disquieted the Peace of, the present Century, let us not presume upon particular Rights, to which we can have no exclusive Claim in our individual Capacity; which have no Foundation in the Laws of God, or Nature, of Reason, or Policy. The Rights, I mean, to dictate to others—to govern for Ourselves—to insult the Person of the Sovereign—to libel the Constitution—or, to sport with the Religion of the Country. These are Rights, which too many have arrogated to Themselves; but which can never be defended upon any of the established Privileges of good Sense, political Decency, personal Candour, social Virtue, or christian Piety.

But, though certain Rights have been improperly assumed, to which none are legally entitled, every Man, of every Rank

and Clafs in Society, has a natural Right, and equal Liberty, to celebrate the Privileges and Bleffings of a Conftitution, to which he is fo much indebted for his perfonal Security and Comfort. And, I know not, whether fuch a Meafure may not be particularly becoming the clerical Character.

For, have we not had too much Reason given us to think, that the Language of *mere Politicians* is the Language of Accommodation to the Party, to which they are attached—in fome Inftances, perhaps, even more than to the real Intereft of their Country? Have we not had fufficient Proofs, that they may *be* every thing, but what they *feem*? and *mean* any thing, but what they *say*? We muft be ftangely infatuated indeed, if we are not convinced by this Time, that, *Political Genius, and Enterprize, without political Integrity and Virtue, are as likely to be the Ruin, as the Glory of any Nation.*

Let

Let every Man therefore, whatever be his Station, civil or ecclesiastical, consider, that, “ The Service of our Country, according to our respective Capacities, and in our different Spheres, whether public or private, is no chimerical, but *a real Duty*. He, who admits the Proofs of any other moral Duty, drawn from the Constitution of human Nature—from the Fitness of Things—or, from the Doctrine of Christianity, must admit them in favour of this Duty, or be reduced to the most absurd Inconsistency. And, when once the Duty is admitted, the Obligations to *the Performance* of it, are in proportion to the Means and Opportunities he has of performing it; and nothing can discharge him from these Obligations, so long as he has any Means and Opportunities in his Power, and so long as his Country may be in want of his Services.”

Should

Should the following Thoughts have their intended Effect on the Mind of the Reader, the Object is answered, and the Writer will have his ample Reward. In that case, the present Apology will be thought irrequisite; and it will be confessed, that,

“ A Cause, like *This*, is its own sacrament :

“ Truth, Justice, Reason, Peace, and Liberty,

“ Th’ eternal Links, that clasp the World, are in it ;

“ And He, who breaks *their* Sanction, breaks all Law,

“ And infinite Connection.”——

THE
Peculiar Advantages,

&c. &c.

PSALM 147. 20.

HE HATH NOT DEALT SO WITH ANY
NATION: AND AS FOR HIS JUDG-
MENTS, THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN
THEM. PRAISE YE THE LORD.

THIS Day is become rather illustrious,
in the Annals of the British Empire, for the
Nativity of a Person, whose Memory, in a
political point of view, and as an Instru-
ment of God to us for national good, de-
serves

serves a Place in our highest Estimation. *King William the Third*, and, *The glorious Revolution*, are Ideas, which almost unavoidably associate in our Minds; and Ideas, which inspire every Lover of his Country, and indeed every Friend of Mankind, with the most agreeable and animating Sensations.

For the particular History and Character of this Prince, as well as for all the concurring Circumstances of that Event, for which it is scarcely possible, but that his Name should be immortal, and his Remembrance forever dear, I shall refer you to those, who have written professedly on the subject *. Much however it is to be lamented,

* I cannot avoid seizing the present Opportunity to remark here, that, It was this Sovereign, who in the very last Speech he delivered from the Throne, if I mistake not, has these Words — “ Let me conjure you to disappoint the only Hopes of our Enemies by your *Unanimity*. I have shewn, and will always shew, how desirous I am to be *The common Father of all my People*. Do you, in like Manner, lay aside all Parties and Divisions. Let there

lamented, that, in our celebration of renowned Characters, uncommon Events, and second Causes, we are exceedingly apt to lose sight of *The great first Cause*; which it is among the principal Designs of genuine Religion, to keep continually in our eye. In conformity to which, and under whose direction, I shall embrace the present very seasonable opportunity, of pointing out the peculiar Advantages and Blessings, which, as a Nation and People, it has been our Privilege to enjoy, for more than a Century, *above* all other Nations and People upon the Face of the habitable Globe.

It is hardly necessary for me to remark, that the Passage I have chosen, for this purpose, has its original Application to the Children of Israel. Nor shall I stay to prove from historical Fact, by any minute

there be no other Distinction heard among us for the future, but of those, who are for *The Protestant Religion*, and *The present Establishment*, and of those, who mean a Popish Prince, and a French Government."

Detail, the strict Propriety of its Application to them. It will be of greater Consequence and use to us, to demonstrate, that, among all the Kingdoms of the known world, at the present Period, there is none, beside that to which we belong, of which it can be said, with such an Emphasis of superior and favourable Distinction, *He hath not dealt so with ANY Nation.*

As Method and Perspicuity—to say nothing of Utility—are almost inseparably connected, in the Communication of Knowledge, the Disposition, of what we have to submit on this Occasion, shall be according to the following Plan. We will endeavour to take a concise, yet comprehensive View of this Nation, in its *political, artificial, and commercial Superiority*, over all others: After that, in its *relative Advantages*: And then, in necessary deduction from these Particulars, in its *peculiar Obligation to praise the Lord.*

☞ The first Object of our Consideration is to be, The Superiority of our own Nation

tion over every other, as to its political Constitution—its artificial and literary Improvements—and its commercial Benefits.

By *the political Constitution* of any Kingdom—notwithstanding the perplexity and confusion, in which seditious and designing Persons may have attempted to involve so plain and simple a Thing—common Sense, and common Honesty, will always suppose is intended, *its particular Form or Mode of Government*: its legal and established Principles, whatever accidental deviation from those Principles may arise from unforeseen Contingencies, from the Necessity of the State, or from any other Causes.

In the general History of the World, there appear to have been only three systematic, established Forms of Government of human Contrivance; three different political Constitutions—somewhat variously modified: which are universally recognized by the distinguishing Titles of, *Republican — Aristocratic —* and, *Monarchical*. Each of these, it is contended, has its

Advantages, and its Disadvantages ; the former of which have been magnified, and the latter diminished, according to the almost infinite Diversity of Prejudices, from Education, Interest, Connections, Tempers, Locality, and the like, by which Individuals will unavoidably be actuated, and influenced. ¶ For, among the great Mass of Mankind, it is hardly to be expected, at a moderate computation, that more than One in a Thousand will weigh any Subject, in the equal Balances of Impartiality, and Truth.

It may indeed be observed here, that, mankind are neither born Politicians, nor are they required to be so. The various Distributions of Providence, which does not seem to have designed us for *A State of Equality*, in any respect, renders it next to impossible. They may reason, they may argue, they may philosophize, and they may rage—according to their different Capacities, Complexions, and Characters ; but the Number of those, who understand only *The Science of Government*, as a Matter of Specu-

Speculation, is comparatively very few — and of those, who understand *The Art of Governing*, as a Matter of Practice, is much fewer still. It is more natural, however, for human Beings to indulge their Conceit, than to acknowledge their Ignorance; to flatter their Vanity, than confess their Insufficiency. And, therefore, it will too often occur, that the very Persons, who are the least informed, will be the least sensible of it; and imagine themselves the most competent to judge, and to determine, as to the Merits and Demerits of every Species of Government — whether it be denominated Republican, Aristocratic, or Monarchical.

Indeed, the more intelligent Part of those, who have accustomed themselves to think with calmness upon a Subject of such comprehension and magnitude, would do well to recollect, that, ~~the~~ The *Philosophy* of Government, is one Thing; the *Policy* of Government, is another. That may be very fine in Philosophy, which is very false in Policy. He must have made but very small Acquisitions indeed in the Science of

Men and Manners, who does not know how vast the Difference is between *what ought to be*, and, *what must be*. That, Honesty is the best Policy, is a Maxim in Conscience and Morals, we cannot but approve and commend; but it must become an universal practical Principle, before it can be applied with Safety as a Maxim in the Governments of States*.

To return, however, from this short Digression. Admitting, upon Principles of Fairness and Candour, that each of the distinct Forms of Government, which have obtained amongst Men, has its respective Excellency, let us admire, let us stand astonished at the Goodness of that Providence, which endued our Forefathers with such Wisdom and Sagacity, as to blend together the Advantages of them all, in *The*

* Not that the Writer means to contend for that Sort of Policy in States, which includes in it Dissimulation, Craft, Falsehood, or Misrepresentation—but That only, which is necessarily implied in the Terms, *Privy Council—Cabinet—and Secretary of State.*

beautiful Fabric of the English Constitution.

For, from *One* of the three Estates of which it consists, we derive all the real Benefits, which can be conceived to flow from the well-regulated Will of **THE PEOPLE.**

From *Another*, we experience all the political Utility, that can result from the most natural intermediate Power—that, of **THE NOBILITY.** And from the *Third*, all the Vigour, Importance, and Dignity, which ought to reside in the representative Head of a great Nation, and which we have long enjoyed in **A LIMITED MONARCH.**

In every Government, properly constituted, there must be three Sorts of Power somewhere—the *legislative*, the *executive*, and, the *judiciary*. According to the *Manner* in which those Powers are deposited, must be the Security, the Peace, and the Prosperity of the Publick, or otherwise. And, without a precise Analysis of each Particular, let it be sufficient to state, that, it would require something more than the Wisdom we are likely to meet with in the present Age, to entrust these several Powers,
with

with greater Accommodation to the good of *the Whole*, in any Mode superior to that of the political Constitution of our own Country.

“ All Men, as it has been frequently observed, naturally desire Riches and Power; and almost all Men will take every Method, to attain them. Hence the Difficulty of governing them, and of instituting a Government equally proper to *restrain*, and to *protect* them; and hence the Insufficiency of any *simple Form of Government*, to provide for the Happiness and Security of Societies. An *arbitrary Prince* will quickly grow into a *Tyrant*. The uncontrouled Dominion of the *Nobles* will as certainly produce *Oligarchy*, or, *the Tyranny of a Few*; that is, Pride, Combination, and Rapine in the Sovereigns, and Misery and Dejection in the Many. And the unrestrained Licentiousness of the Multitude will beget Confusion and Anarchy. To provide against these certain and eternal Evils, *mixed Forms of Government* were invented; where *Dominion and Liberty* are so
equally

equally tempered, and so mutually checked, one by another, that neither of them can have Interest and Force enough to oppress the other."

✚ " It requires therefore our best Thoughts, and *most vigorous Resolutions*, to preserve *our Constitution* entire in *all* its Parts; without suffering any one Part to prevail so far over the other, as to reduce it to *any simple Form of Government*, which must always end in *Tyranny*."

To all this, we are by no Means insensible, it will be objected—and there is no Objection more frequently repeated, nor any perhaps more eagerly embraced, though it has nothing to recommend it, but specious Plausibility—and very little more to sanction it, than the natural propensity of Mankind to Discontent, and love of Change; it will however be objected, to all that can be urged, in favour of our happy Constitution, that, " Its Defects are many, and its Abuses great."

Be it remembered, in reply, that, The best Things are always liable to the worst Abuse—and, in too many instances, this is generally the case: that, in the Instance before us, the Fault is not in *the Frame of our Government*, but in the unconquerable *Depravities* of those, who are connected with it, and which indeed are, more, or less, the Disgrace of our common Nature: and that, Political Reformers have themselves been known to commit more atrocious Crimes, when the Temptation of Power and Opportunity has offered, than those they have so severely censured and condemned in others*.

* All of us agree, that, We are born to *Liberty*; and that, It is our Duty to preserve it. And yet, the most ingenuous Writers will confess, that, it is impossible to prevent the *Abuse* of it, without running a great Hazard of destroying *Liberty itself*. So that the Question is, Whether we ought to give up the great Advantages of Liberty, rather than submit to the Inconveniences, which must naturally attend it. And is not the same Mode of reasoning equally applicable to our own Constitution?

Not

Not that it is absolutely necessary to propose such Considerations, as these, by way of Reply — though they certainly ought to have their proper Weight. It might have been sufficient to have remarked, that, In all human Affairs, every Thing is defective — unless it be in the Imagination of an *Abstract Utopian*. *Abstract Man* — *Abstract Rights* — *Abstract Power* — *Abstract Laws* — and *Abstract Legislatures*, are the pleasing Sports of philosophical Reverie, and solitary Seclusion : but, in the wide Converse of the World, a very little Observation must convince us, that, however agreeable in Idea, like the Flights of a poetic Fancy, they exist nowhere but in the Brain of their Creator.

It is a Position, we may venture to lay down with a degree of Confidence, not to be assumed, because not defensible, on some other Occasions, that, ~~at~~ From the Moment, in which our first Parents were expelled the Paradise of Eden, to the present Period, there has been *no perfect Character*, among the mere Sons of Men — *no perfect Society*.

Society—no perfect State. And, if there be no Government approved, till it be found free from *Imperfection* and *Abuse*, we must remain dissatisfied to the End.

To expect Inconveniences, in all Circumstances and Situations, which relate to the History of Man, and to be resigned to them, is the characteristic Evidence of a comprehensive, a benevolent, and a christian Mind. Some, however, as the immortal *Bacon* has long since remarked, affect to procure Reputation, only by starting *Objections*. But, who would envy the Felicities of a Disposition, that, like the moping Owl, is always blinking at the Light of Day; or, like the surly Cynic, the minute Philosopher, and the fastidious Reviewer, is wasting its Time and Spirits in nibbling at Defects, when it might be exhilarating both, in admiring Beauties! Why should not the excellent Rule of Horace, in The Art of Criticism, be equally excellent in The Art of Government—

Non ego paucis
Offendar Maculis—ubi plurima nitent.

After

After all, let the Circumstances of Abuse and Imperfection, which have no doubt been sufficiently exaggerated, be whatever they may—though it is far from our Design to justify the one, or to commend the other—such is nevertheless the palpable Superiority of our political Constitution over every other, beneath the canopy of heaven, that we ought to behold it with *Loyalty, Veneration, and Esteem*; and, with suitable Affections to the great Benefactor of the World, to exclaim, HE HATH NOT DEALT SO WITH ANY NATION.

The Cause for this grateful Effusion will not at all be lessened, if we dwell a little, as it becomes us to do, upon that rich Variety of Advantages, which, as a Kingdom, we derive from the Improvement of Arts, and from the Cultivation of Science. If the several Arts of Agriculture—of Architecture—of Sculpture—of Painting—of Poetry—of Music—or, of War; if the Extension and Universality of Commerce; if the Sciences of Philosophy—of Ethics—of Civil Law—of Metaphysics—of Mathe-

matics—of Navigation—and Astronomy; if these, I say, be considered as Sources of Honour and of Happiness to a Nation, is there *any Nation*, that, in either of these Respects, in *Arts*, in *Sciences*, or in *Commerce*, has exceeded our own? Nor let me forget to remind you, that, The Reason, in all probability, why we are so eminently distinguished, in these particulars, is, *the Spirit, the Genius, the comparative Perfection*, at least, of *our political Constitution*, or, Mode of Government. But I must hasten now, to a more important Division of the Subject before us—which is—to point out *The religious Advantages*, it is our Privilege to enjoy *above every other Nation*.

PART

PART II.

WHEN the inspired Penman of the Psalm, from which the Text is selected, was celebrating the providential Distinctions, by which the Jewish People had been exclusively favoured, he crowns them all with saying, as the Consummation of every other Blessing, “ He sheweth *his Word* unto Jacob, his *Statutes* and his *Judgments* unto Israel. He hath not dealt *so* with *any* Nation ; and, as for his Judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.”

By *his Word*, I shall not stay to recite the numerous Authorities, which it were very easy to adduce from the sacred Code, to shew, that we ought to understand, divine Revelation, in general. As it is written, “ What Advantage then hath the Jew ? or, What Profit is there in Circumcision ? Much, every way : *chiefly*, because unto them were committed *The Oracles of God*.

By the *Statutes* and *Judgments* of the Lord, I should conceive it proper to understand, the particular Contents of that Word: the former, in reference to his divine Ordinances, or Institutions—and, the latter, to the Sentiments and Decisions of the only wise God, respecting the great Points, of *true Religion* and *Virtue*—the *supreme Good of Man*—and, *his final and everlasting State*.

So that, if, amidst all the vexatious Difference of Opinion, which obtains in the World, we really desire to know, what is *the Judgment of God*, as to the present terrestrial Scene of Things—its Riches, its Pleasures, its Honours, its Friendship, Pursuits, and End; or, if we wish to be acquainted with the Judgment of Heaven, as to our religious State and Character, or as to Religion itself—what it is—its Nature, Operations, Uses, and Excellency, we must have recourse to his own divine Oracles. “To the Law, and to the Testimony,” as saith the Prophet Isaiah; “because, if they speak not according to *this Rule*, there

no Light in them." "They *alone* are able to make us *wise unto Salvation*, through Faith, which is in Christ Jesus. For all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God: and is profitable for Doctrine—for Re-proof—for Correction—and for Instruction in Righteousness; that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works."

But, in order to be properly impressed with a Sense of the great Advantages of *a divine Revelation*, as such—we should study the *Necessity* of it, in the History of those Nations, which have been left to a worse than Egyptian Darkness—to their own unnatural, and almost incredible Superstition—and, still more incredible, Idolatry. We should consult, with Attention and Diligence, the Pages of Heathen Story; and, if we read them with the Observation of intelligent Beings, and in the serious Recollection of that supernatural Light, which is come into the World, much as we may admire in a due Degree the Maxims of Wisdom, and the moral Hints, which occasionally

caſionally emitted from the unilluminated Minds of a Socrates, a Plato, an Aristotle, a Pythagoras, or a Seneca, we ſhall hardly be able ever to take up our BIBLE, without being ready to ſay, *Thanks be to God, for THIS UNSPEAKABLE GIFT!*

To excite ſuch Emotions, as theſe, in our Breſts, and to render them, by Habit, a kind of Second Nature, ſhould we not do well to meditate, with intense Application, on that deplorable Ignorance, that painful Suſpenſe, that agitating Uncertainty, that reſtleſs Scepticiſm of Thought, in which, *without* this merciful Diſplay of heavenly Beneſicence, we muſt all have been involved? ſailing for ever on the troubled Ocean of unſatisfied Enquiry — toſſed on the Billows of Doubt and Apprehenſion, without any Ark of Repoſe for the Mind — and wretchedly benighted, as to all the vaſt Concerns of Religion, the Soul, and an eternal Scene.

It would be no leſs becoming the Dignity of thoſe intellectual Powers, with
which

which we are created, to consider again *the very peculiar Advantages*, which we, *as a Nation*, enjoy, in this Respect, compared with the antient Jews—the Members of the Romish Church—and, the Disciples of Mahomet, the notorious Arabian Impostor.

For, with the Whole of divine Revelation, complete in all its Parts—which the Israelites themselves, antecedent to the apostolical Age, had never possessed; with that Revelation, entirely free from all the Horrors, Perversion, Errors, and Apostacy of Popish Abominations, and unadulterated with the monstrous Extravagance, the preposterous Absurdities, and the contemptible Falshoods of the Mahometan Profession—We may read, and mark, and learn, and inwardly digest it, without any Fear or Interruption, either from *civil Despotism*, or from *spiritual Tyranny*.

What, therefore, the Jews, as a very high Distinction, of inestimable Value, enjoyed in *Part*—We have, in *Perfection*. What They had in *Promise, Type, and Prophecy,*

phesy, WE have in *Fulfillment*. For,
 “ God, who at sundry Times, and in divers
 Manners, spake unto the Fathers by the
 Prophets, hath in these last Days spoken
 unto us by his SON ; who is the Alpha and
 the Omega, the Beginning and the End of
 the Law and the Prophets, for Righteousness,
 unto every One that believeth in Him.”

In subordination to *The sacred Scriptures*,
 and as a secondary Mean or Instrument of
 promoting both national and personal Re-
 ligion, we have *An ecclesiastical Establishment*
 —which, if not the very best within the
 Regions of Possibility, is certainly the best,
 that has ever yet been devised by human
 Wisdom. An Establishment, which, in
 Point of *Doctrine*, is too pure and uncor-
 rupt, to admit of any Alteration without a
 manifest Injury to its Christian Excellence
 —so long as we adhere to “ the Revela-
 tion of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus
 Christ himself being the chief Corner
 Stone ; in whom, all the Building, fitly
 framed together, groweth unto an holy
 Temple in the Lord.”

To

To quarrel therefore with the Doctrines of our *national Church*, is, in my humble Opinion, to quarrel with the essential and characteristic Articles of our most holy Faith. And those, I apprehend, are the severest Adversaries to the former, who have the least cordial Attachment to the latter. They would allure us indeed with the insinuating Charms of *Liberality of Sentiment*—of *Candour*—and *universal Charity*. In other words—and they are the Words of One, who was altogether perfect in these respects—“ They come to us in Sheep’s cloathing; but, like the false Prophets, there referred to, they may nevertheless be inwardly ravening Wolves.” *Beware of these Men*. Strip them of their fascinating Disguise, and let them but appear in their proper Colours, and, peradventure, amidst all their enchanting Pretences, the most strenuous Advocates for *Liberality of Sentiment* may become the most inexorable Persecutors—just as the most declamatory Pleaders for *Liberty*, at one Time, have been the most virulent Oppressors at another.

With respect to *the Liturgy*, and *the Forms* of our national Church, I might perhaps be censured by some, whom I mean not to offend, and be suspected by others of *excessive Partiality*, were I to utter all I think, and feel, upon that Subject. Apologies have been published in their Defence; but, I presume, they need none. There is nothing in either, that the Judgment of unbiaſſed Reason can condemn, or that the Modesty of Religion need to blush at. Nor can I withhold from saying, till I am convinced of my Mistake, that, they contain nothing, but what sound Devotion may justly admire, and what the Weakness of Prejudice alone will ever induce us to degrade,

As to some of the more obsolete Customs of our Establishment, since Time has thrown them nearly out of Sight, the Spirit of Benevolence, good Temper, and that Love of Unanimity, which ought certainly to be encouraged, and prevail, should keep them at this Period, as much as possible out of Contention and Dispute. Or
else,

else, what is it, but to sacrifice that very *Charity* and *Candor*, which we profess to exalt, to personal Affectation and Singularity?

Besides—is it liberal? is it manly? is it amiable? is it virtuous, to insult a national Church, when the civil Legislature has granted *A Toleration* to those, who, from Principle and Conscience disaffect it? May not its Friends, and its Members, be *tolerated* too? May they not be deemed to act from equal Integrity and Conscience—though they so widely differ from Dissenters of various Denominations—who, by the way, as widely differ from each other? Why should the tolerated be so very intolerant? Why be so warm in the Cause of their own Liberty of Conscience, and yet so averse to that of others? Be it so—as we are frequently reminded, that some among us are so awfully destitute of *inward Morality*, as to subscribe to Articles of Faith, for the Sake of *Preferment*, which they totally disbelieve, so much the worse for Them. Still, “it is
to

to their own Master, and not at your Bar, they are to stand or fall. "Who art thou, that judgest another Man's Servant?" Let us consider Things, not in their minute *Circumstantialities*, but in the grand Scale; let us not be so much engrossed by the comparatively immaterial Concerns of Individuals, but take our Impressions from a public Spirit, and the public Good; and then, we shall at least be so much the wiser and happier, as we shall be the more united, and disagree the less; and then, surrounded, as we certainly are, with every Superiority, *political, commercial, and religious*, we shall be compelled to say, of the great Author of all, HE HATH NOT DEALT SO WITH ANY NATION.

Upon this presumption, we may very confidently proceed, to enforce the special Obligations, we are all of us under, *To praise the LORD.*

PART

P A R T III.

ALL Obligations arise, in the very Nature of Things, from certain Benefits received. And, as these Obligations must always be in Proportion to the Benefits received, whether more or less, it will readily be admitted, I should imagine, that *a Sense* of these Obligations upon the Mind and Heart ought to be exactly in the same Proportion,

In the present Case, it has been all along taken for granted, that, ~~or~~ There is a superintending Providence, which directs and governs all Things, however invisible the Hand, in Heaven and in Earth : and, that the Rise, Progress, and Perfection, the Decline and Fall of Empires and of States, depend entirely upon his uncontrollable Will and Pleasure.

Whether, or not, this be a first Principle of the Religion of Nature, it is perhaps
more

more easy to assert, than to prove. Be that as it may, it is the uniform Declaration of that sacred Volume, which we conceive to be the only infallible Teacher, that the Creator of the Universe has given to the Children of Men.

The particular Title, by which this Creator, or superintending Providence, is here represented to us, is, **THE LORD** : which is very well understood to signify, his unbounded Dominion, and sovereign Authority, over all Worlds, Persons, Events, and Things — together with his original, independent, and unalienable Propriety in them. As **THE LORD**, He is from everlasting to everlasting, the Possessor of Heaven and Earth. “Thine, O **LORD**, is the Greatness, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Majesty ! Thine is the Kingdom, and Thou rulest over All.”

Upon this Account, whether we contemplate the divine Being, the triune God, the Lord, in his own excellent Greatness—
in

in the Glories of his essential Nature—in the Manifestation of his Attributes—or in the more especial Displays of his Goodness, he is incontrovertibly the proper and supreme Object of PRAISE to all created Intelligencies. An Object too, in the celebration of whose Praises, we can be in no Danger of false Panegyric, of Adulation, or Excess. And, to praise the Lord, is one of the Ways, in which, he is pleased to inform us, he is glorified and exalted by his reasonable Creatures.

If we would be furnished with the most sublime, animating, and devout Specimens of the Nature of that Praise, which is acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, we have nothing to do, but to consult *The Book of Psalms*; where we shall soon be taught, what is the holy Enthusiasm, the divine Fervour of a grateful Heart; where we shall see, that, in this particular Exercise of a pious Mind, to *feel*, is to be *fired*; that Reason herself is transported into a heavenly Passion; and, that the Form of Godliness is elevated into the most ardent
Power

Power thereof. Nor let it ever be supposed, that Incense uninflamed, the dull cold Efforts of what has of late been recommended to us as *rational Christianity*, can possibly supply the want of those sweet Odours of the Heart, which are the genuine Fruits of *divine and renovating Grace* *.

Were the Subject under our immediate Discussion limited to Individuals, as such—were it not addressed to you rather as Members of the Body politic—it would become

* From the very alarming State of Religion, or rather, from the rapid Increase of Infidelity and Irreligion in this Country, I could wish it might be enquired, whether much of it be not owing to the mere moral Preaching of the Times: to the frequent Repetition of such Terms, as these, in our Pulpits—*The Light of Nature*—*The Religion of Reason*—*The Dictates of natural Conscience*—and the like, to the total Neglect of the Style and Language of the sacred Writings—the Operations of the holy Spirit—and the Influences of divine Grace. Would *Voltaire*, *Rosséau*, *Mahomet*, or any of their antichristian Disciples, object to this Mode of Preaching? *In fact*, it has served *their Cause*, much more than that of *Revelation*.

me,

me, from the official Situation, in which I am placed, to recall to your Memory the countless Blessings you have received from the divine Bounty in every Stage of your Existence, and in every various Allotment of Life. The Blessings, which appertain to your mortal Body, and the still more inestimable Blessings, which belong to a reasonable and immortal Soul. Blessings, with which we are supplied from every different Element—from the particular Spot, in which we have been born—from the Climate, in which we live—and, from the Relations, with which we are connected. To be unaffected by such a Multitude of Blessings, as these, to be unmindful of the Hand from whence they flow, to forget to call upon our Souls, and all that is within us, to praise his holy Name, would betray a Degree of Ingratitude, at which a Heathen, not to say a Christian, ought to be confounded.

But, it has been our Object, to excite your Attention more especially to *the national Blessings*, by which we are *so eminently*

nently distinguished. To *The glorious Revolution*, as in some Measure the principal Source of them all, under the divine Providence. Inasmuch, as we are bound to ascribe to that Event, our compleat Deliverance from *Popish Tyranny*, and from *arbitrary Power*. An Event too, which stands upon Record as a Memorial to every succeeding Age, that, “As Providence has endued Royalty with Power, for the sole Purpose of increasing the Happiness and Security of Mankind—when a Monarch, forgetful of this indispensable Duty, would divest himself of the paternal Character for that of *A Tyrant*, the Bonds of Obedience are loosed; and a Nation, not habituated to Slavery, will no longer regard him, but as an Idol of their own Formation, which Resistance can reduce to its primitive Insignificance.” To this Doctrine, we are indebted, for THE ILLUSTRIOUS HOUSE of HANOVER; and, for the present most highly, universally, and justly esteemed Sovereign of these Realms. WHOM GOD PRESERVE!

With

With regard to *The Manner*, in which it becomes us to express our Gratitude and Praise to God, for numberless Obligations to him—we will endeavour to be as brief, as Propriety will suffer us to be. The Piety of your Attention, it is to be hoped, will make amends for the Conciseness of our Remarks.

Be it remembered then, that, in praising the Lord, we must be principally careful that our Hearts are *inwardly* affected with a Sense of his Goodness. Truth, or Sincerity, in the inward Parts, is an express Requisition of the Most High God, in this religious Exercise. God is a Spirit: and they who praise him, as well as those, who worship him, must praise him, and worship him in Spirit and in Truth.

It should be remembered again, that this Impression of the divine Favours should not only be internal, but *abiding*. Instead of being suspended, or diminishing at all, a very little serious Reflection will be sufficient to convince us, that it ought to be

uninterrupted and increasing. For, though the Bounties of Heaven, we have already received, should provoke our habitual Praise, when we recollect, that they are daily renewed, and continued, the Flame of our Thankfulness ought to be forever burning to the Honour of the Lord.

There is yet another Circumstance, which should be always uppermost in our Memories and Minds—which is, that, ~~to~~ All the Advantages, with which we are indulged by the divine Providence and Grace—whether they be *national* or *personal*, *civil* or *religious*, are not only to be enjoyed with Gratitude, but to be most conscientiously improved to the Glory of the Giver, and to our own highest Concerns—to the Interest and Welfare of our immortal Souls.

A Declaration, like this, and cloathed in such Terms, will have but little weight, it may be supposed, with those, whose Minds are so *grossly materialized*, as to have admitted the heathenish Doctrine of some
modern

modern Philosophers, with respect to *the Soul*; or the still more heathenish Doctrine of those, who would banish the divine Providence, and all the Influences of Religion, from the Government of Nations and Empires. With People of this Stamp, all Ideas are to be swallowed up in what they shall determine to be *The Rights of Man*; and, with Them, *national Religion* and *national Policy*, like two parallel Lines, are never to meet.

From such however, as are not sunk so very low into a kind of brutal Degeneracy, as to set *Legislation* and *Piety* at war with each other, we may still hope for some candid and favourable Attention, while we observe, that, At the final Audit of Accounts, at the Judgment of the great Day, unto whomsoever much has been given, of him much will be required. It will then appear, that *national Privileges* have been not only a *Gift*, but a *Trust*; a *Talent*, to be *improved*, as well as a *Blessing* to be *enjoyed*. The Possession of extensive Property—superior Endowments of Mind—elevated Rank in Life—the Religion of

our Country, in its present State of Purity and Reformation—and the Freedom of our happy Constitution, while they are all of them distinguished Favours of the divine Providence, are Favours, for which he will come to reckon with his Servants, as the tremendous Judge of quick and dead.

In the Faith of that eventful Crisis, upon which the everlasting Fate of the whole human Race depends—in the View of that *universal Revolution* in the History of all Nations and People, not to be solemn, is to be callous to the noblest Feelings of an Immortal; not to be affected, is to be impious. Suffer me then, from the present State of Europe, and in this Hour of serious Reflection, to conclude with a Remark, or two, which, I persuade myself, is by no Means *unseasonable*, and which, I am very certain, is perfectly well-meant.

You cannot but observe, I think, that, much of the Conversation of these unusual Times is turning continually upon the *political Regeneration* of Kingdoms—the *civil Constitution* of States—and, the *natural*

ral Liberties, or, Rights of Man. These are the almost uninterrupted Themes of the daily Papers, of the various Publications issuing from the Prefs, and of general Discourse in every Class of Society,

Allow me then, very earnestly to recommend it to you, as professing the Religion of Christ — while others are talking about the political Regeneration of Kingdoms, to be studying the Nature of that *spiritual Regeneration*, upon which our blessed Saviour so much insisted, in his ever memorable Conference with Nicodemus — a Master in Israel; the absolute Necessity of a personal Acquaintance with which, he enforced, from this very awful Consideration, that, without it, we never can be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven.

While others are agitating — and in too many Instances, with much more Zeal than Knowledge, with much more Heat than Discretion, the comparative Excellencies of the different Constitutions in civil Government,

verninent, do you be examining into *The Constitution of Man*. An Enquiry, in the great Scale of Things, of infinitely higher Importance to you, than that of *The Rights of Man*, as to his political Immunities.

By *The Constitution of Man*, is intended here, your own Constitution, as an immortal Individual—consisting of Spirit, Soul, and Body; as a rational, intelligent, and accountable Creature; as a Subject of the moral Government of God—before whom you must very shortly be summoned to appear. And, therefore, when I urge upon you this Study, it is not upon the unsatisfactory Principles of Philosophy merely human, or of unenlightened Reason, but upon the more decisive Principles of divine Revelation. Study your *Self*, your *Nature*, *Character*, *State*, and *End*, in the faithful Mirror of The Oracles of God.

And, while others are contending for that *equal Liberty*, which they assert to be the natural and unalienable Right of Man, as Man—and contending for it, with as much

Ardor, as they ought to do for Glory and Immortality in a future World—do you be no less fervent and anxious for that Liberty, which is indeed the only true, *The glorious Liberty of the Children of God*—the Liberty, wherewith Christ came down from Heaven, to make his Servants free. And, “If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free *indeed*.”

In a Word; while some are irritating the Minds of the Ignorant, and others are inflaming the Spirits of the Seditious; while some are exciting Faction, and others are provoking Discontent, and Both are labouring with all their Powers and Influence, to effect *An inglorious Revolution* in Church and State—do you be employed in recounting the numerous Blessings, and peculiar Advantages, with which we are favoured by the divine Providence *above* every Nation in the known World. For, He hath not dealt so with ANY Nation. Therefore,

PRAISE YE THE LORD,

F I N I S.

In a few Days will be published,

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

HINTS

TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND

FOR THE YEAR

1793.

